A U M

The one ruler, the inner Self of all being, who makes one form manifold; the wise who behold him within themselves, theirs is happiness, and not others'.
—UPANISHADS

THEOSOPHY

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THE FORMS THAT PERISH

ONE reason for the intuitive respect so widely accorded Jefferson's and Paine's concept of American Democracy is the fact that neither of these "Founding Fathers" worshipped a *form* of government. Their "democracy" was the implementation of a spiritual philosophy, and to the extent that their ideal has been confused with a form, to that extent will it be extinguished by events—while its existence in principle may last as long as men remember that government is only a subordinate means to the end of individual progress.

In order to understand the meaning of "American Democracy," from its date of formal inauguration and painful beginning in July, 1776, the nature of the march of soul evolution must be considered. The government which Paine, Jefferson and Washington envisioned was not in a strict sense "democracy." Nor was it strictly "republican." Nor was it at all "anarchical," though protection of the individual conscience was a central concern.

The best of governments are but shadowy and obscure reflections of the awakening of individual human souls. The self-reliance of spirit which dethroned medieval despotism had roots in the questing, questioning attitudes of the few who dared to throw off the mental bonds of fear. During the Renaissance the popular idea of what was acceptable as "government" was radically altered, amid those mighty confusions which came to avenge the tyranny of centuries and the corruption of natural caste. Philosophers were not kings—nor had they been, in the memory of man. The Renaissance looked back upon hereditary rulers whose authority had been acknowledged without question. Kings were expected to pass on the tradition of "good stewardship" to their heirs apparent. But the *form* of monarchy as well as its current practices grew suspect when exploitation instead of stewardship became the rule. Machiavelli, not Plato, was the

teacher. Asoka of India and Cesare Borgia expressed quite different philosophies of "ruler" and "ruled." Also, linked with the abuses of arbitrary government in the European nation-states was the authoritarianism of religion. Let a ruler believe that he holds sway *over the souls* of his people, and he becomes at once a tyrant by conviction. Authority for the routine, necessary affairs of government is one thing; trafficking with the moral freedom of independent beings quite another.

And so the form of democracy became a corrective for tyranny, a gradual recognition that men should not be owned or controlled by a single Authority. Democracy, however, means self-determination of groups. The will of the majority is to prevail; the minority must accede. But according to the troublesome principle of hierarchy, which operates throughout nature, the aristocratic form of government can be defended with a degree of reasonableness. This principle cannot be omitted, and it asserts that *some,* in a democracy, will be chosen to make *some* of the decisions for others—since not all men desire the responsibilities inseparable from the work of government. This is the logic of a "republic." The democracy idealized by Jefferson and Paine embodied what is essential to both democracies and republics, but also incorporated the principle of autarchy in a few important relations. There were some things, they held, which must be left to the self-determination of *individuals*—the democratic guarantee of self-determination of groups being insufficient. Matters of religion—ultimate belief in principle—could not be rightly left either to "majorities" or to the decisions of republican ministers of state.

The theosophical student can, therefore, perceive the philosophical greatness of the American Constitution. It was molded by men who thought in terms of the evolution of the individual human soul and not in terms of "realpolitik." Paine used the same principles which are embodied in the three fundamental propositions of the *Secret Doctrine.* While neither Paine, nor Paine and Jefferson combined, were responsible for the whole pattern of the Constitution, the principles introduced by them left an indelible mark upon history. Even in an age of "mass men," the Supreme Court of the United States still manages occasionally to defend the individual's right to self-rule in moral situations.

This same principle is essential to any theosophical program of education—and government, ideally, is but the organ for universal formulation of such an effort in instruction. Souls grow

by exercising freedom of choice—and by learning that they are alone responsible for the results of those choices. As the child in an intelligent family is encouraged to stand upon his own feet, so can enlightened governments perceive the naturalness of non-conformity in the body politic. But such recognition can only exist when legislators and executives see for themselves the vision that inspired the "Founding Fathers." The road to such a vision is found by dwelling upon a spiritual philosophy of life's purposes. Citizens who seek to embody a like vision will find it necessary to follow in principle the admonition on the matter which H. P. Blavatsky left for theosophists:

"Act individually and not collectively. . . . We should aim at creating *free* men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects."

Spiritual Influence

Deity, after the biblical six days of creation, has in nowise given Itself up to resting from the labor, but is everlastingly in action as on the "first" day. To produce a world from simple elements and set it rolling through space, year-in year-out under the rays of brilliant sun, would have seemed an amusing joke, had not the plan to build upon this material foundation a nursery for a world of Souls inhered in It. The average man thinks and talks as if God had, since those very ancient days, retired into some peaceful, quiet retreat, and left man to work out by himself the ways and means to get on alone. And so it has come about that only in religious and moral questions the influence of a Deity is recognized, while the products of art and science are the results of human endeavor alone. However, let anyone try to bring to light such harmonies and masterpieces as bear the names of Mozart, Raphael or Shakespeare! Even in our reactions to these masterpieces we vaguely feel the powers of a world-soul, but, were it not that we ourselves are ensouled by divine powers, it would not be possible for us to recognize them in others.

Every manifestation of Divine Power, every momentous apperception, every invention, every great thought that comes to fruition and is big with consequences, lies beyond the command of personal desires, is elevated above all earthly powers. It asserts itself in him alone who is worthy to receive the down-pouring of spiritual influence.

—Goethe

ARE CHELAS "MEDIUMS" ?

[The object of H. P. Blavatsky was to elevate the race; her method was, in Mr. Judge's words, "to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step." She came bringing a philosophy which would enable its students to participate consciously in mental evolution. The psychology implicit in the theosophical philosophy enables the individual to assume more and more responsibility for his actions, through understanding the inner laws, forces and phenomena that generate, surround and ramify from any action. But this psychology can not be written down or taught. The laws and principles of it may be and have been recorded, but to those who are neither ready nor willing to make use of them, the laws must remain half-interesting theories, and the principles half-dogmatic rules.

"Are Chelas 'Mediums'?" first published in *The Theosophist*, June, 1884, is something more than an academic definition of misunderstood terms. The ideas expressed are important—could they only be known—to every man, woman and child. Any one who reads a book, goes to the theatre, or listens to the radio; who joins an army, a political party or a church; as well as one who *refuses*, from motives either of principle or prejudice, to do any one of these things—is concerned with the problem here outlined. To know himself, man must know of what or whom he is the "medium," and what are the component parts of the being, nature, or "self" he aims to control. And though he will find no other knowledge so difficult to avail himself of, he can inwardly realize that no other knowledge will finally avail him.—Eds. THEOSOPHY]

ACCORDING to the newest edition of the *Imperial Dictionary*, by John Ogilvie, L.L.D., "A medium is a person through whom the action of another being is said to be manifested and transmitted by animal magnetism, or a person through whom spiritual manifestations are claimed to be made; especially one who is said to be capable of holding intercourse with the spirits of the deceased."

As Occultists do not believe in any communication with the "spirits of the deceased" in the ordinary acceptation of the term, for the simple reason that they know that the *spirits* of "the deceased" cannot and do not come down and communicate with us; and as the above expression *"by animal magnetism"* would probably have been modified, if the editor of the *Imperial Dictionary* had been an Occultist, we therefore are only concerned with the first part of the definition of the word *"Medium,"* which says: *"A Medium is a person, through whom the action of another being*

is said to be manifested and transmitted"; and we should like to be permitted to add: *"By the either consciously or unconsciously active will of that other being."*

It would be extremely difficult to find on earth a human being who could not be more or less influenced by the *"Animal Magnetism"* or by the active *Will* (which sends out that "Magnetism") of another. If the beloved General rides along the front, the soldiers all become *"Mediums."* They become filled with enthusiasm, they follow him without fear, and storm the death-dealing battery. One common impulse pervades them all; each one becomes the "Medium" of another, the coward becomes filled with heroism, and only he who is *no medium* at all and therefore insensible to epidemic or endemic moral influences, will make an exception, assert his independence and run away.

The "revival preacher" will get up in his pulpit, and although what he says is the most incongruous nonsense, still his actions and the lamenting tone of his voice are sufficiently impressive to produce "a change of heart" amongst, at least, the female part of his congregation, and if he is a powerful man, even sceptics "that came to scoff, remain to pray." People go to the theatre and shed tears or "split their sides" with laughter according to the character of the performance, whether it be a pantomine, a tragedy or a farce. There is no man, except a genuine block-head, whose emotions and consequently whose actions cannot be influenced in some way or other, and thereby *the action of another be manifested or transmitted through him.* All men and all women and children are therefore *Mediums,* and a person who is not a *Medium* is a monster, an abortion of nature, because he stands without the pale of humanity.

The above definition can therefore hardly be considered sufficient to express the meaning of the word "Medium" in the popular acceptation of the term, unless we add a few words, and say: "A medium is a person through whom the action of another being is said to be manifested and transmitted *to an abnormal extent* by the consciously or unconsciously active will of that other being." This reduces the number of "Mediums" in the world to an extent proportionate to the space around which we draw the line between the normal and abnormal, and it will be just as difficult to determine who is a medium and who is not a medium, as it is to say where sanity ends and where insanity begins. Every man has his little "weaknesses," and every man has his little "mediumship"—that is to say, some vulnerable point by which he may be taken unawares.

The one may therefore not be considered really insane; neither can the other be called a "medium." Opinions often differ, whether a man is insane or not, and so they may differ as to his mediumship. Now in practical life a man may be very eccentric, but he is not considered insane, until his insanity reaches such a degree that he does not know any more what he is doing, and is therefore unable to take care of himself or his business.

We may extend the same line of reasoning to Mediums, and say that only such persons shall be considered mediums, who allow other beings to influence them in the above described manner *to such an extent that they lose their self-control* and have no more power or will of their own to regulate their own actions. Now such a relinquishing of self-control may be either active or passive, conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary, and differs according to the nature of the beings who exercise the said active influence over the medium.

A person may consciously and voluntarily submit his will to another being and become his slave. This other being may be a human being, and the medium will then be his obedient servant and may be used by him for good or for bad purposes. This other "being" may be an *idea,* such as love, greediness, hate, jealousy, avarice, or some other passion, and the effect on the medium will be proportionate to the strength of the idea and the amount of self-control left in the medium. This "other being" may be an elementary or an elemental, and the poor medium become an epileptic, a maniac or a criminal. This "other being" may be the man's own higher principle, either alone or put into rapport with another ray of the collective universal spiritual principle, and the "medium" will then be a great genius, a writer, a poet, an artist, a musician, an inventor, and so on. This "other being" may be one of those exalted beings, called Mahatmas, and the conscious and voluntary medium will then be called their "Chela."

Again, a person may never in his life have heard the word "Medium" and still be a strong Medium, although entirely unconscious of the fact. His actions may be more or less influenced unconsciously by his visible or invisible surroundings. He may become a prey to Elementaries or Elementals, even without knowing the meaning of these words, and he may consequently become a thief, a murderer, a ravisher, a drunkard or a cut-throat, and it has often enough been proved that crimes frequently become epidemic; or again he may by certain invisible influences be made to accomplish acts which are not at all consistent with his character such as

previously known. He may be a great liar and for once by some unseen influence be induced to speak the truth; he may be ordinarily very much afraid and yet on some great occasion and on the spur of the moment commit an act of heroism; he may be a street-robber and vagabond and suddenly do an act of generosity, etc.

Furthermore, a medium may know the sources from which the influence comes, or in more explicit terms, *"the nature of the being whose action is transmitted through him,"* or he may not know it. He may be under the influence of his own seventh principle and imagine to be in communication with a personal Jesus Christ, or a saint; he may be in rapport with the "intellectual" ray of Shakespeare and write Shakespearean poetry, and at the same time imagine that the personal spirit of Shakespeare is writing through him, and the simple fact of his believing this or that, would make his poetry neither better nor worse. He may be influenced by some Adept to write a great scientific work and be entirely ignorant of the source of his inspiration, or perhaps imagine that it was the "spirit" of Faraday or Lord Bacon that is writing through him, while all the while he would be acting as a "Chela," although ignorant of the fact.

From all this it follows that the exercise of mediumship consists in the more or less complete giving up of self-control, and whether this exercise is good or bad, depends entirely on the use that is made of it and the purpose for which it is done. This again depends on the degree of knowledge which the mediumistic person possesses, in regard to the nature of the being to whose care he either voluntarily or involuntarily relinquishes for a time the guardianship of his physical or intellectual powers. A person who entrusts indiscriminately those faculties to the influence of every unknown power, is undoubtedly a "crank," and cannot be considered less insane than the one who would entrust his money and valuables to the first stranger or vagabond that would ask him for the same. We meet occasionally such people, although they are comparatively rare, and they are usually known by their idiotic stare and by the fanaticism with which they cling to their ignorance. Such people ought to be pitied instead of blamed, and if it were possible, they should be enlightened in regard to the danger which they incur; but whether a Chela, who consciously and willingly lends for a time his mental faculties to a superior being, whom he knows, and in whose purity of motives, honesty of purpose, intelligence, wisdom and power he has full confidence, can be considered a "Medium" in

the vulgar acceptation of the term, is a question which had better be left to the reader—after a due consideration of the above—to decide for himself.

THE STUDY OF SELF

In what manner does entrance on the path of occultism cause the special evil latent in the individual to express itself in his life and acts? Is it because early steps in occult knowledge destroy the force of the conventional ideas of morality . . .; and that until ALTRUISM *assumes definite sway over his mind and motives, the individual is without practical and efficient restraints upon his* LOWER SELF? *Or is it, on the other hand, the operation of* KARMIC LAW *upon the character of the individual, making use of his* PERSONAL VANITY *as a fulcrum for forcing the special weakness of his Lower Self into a reckless expression of itself?*

W.Q.J.—While the questioner answers his question himself, it only gives half the subject. The real study—on the path—of occultism not only brings out latent evil but also latent good. The right way to express it is, "the study of true occultism, or the walking on its path, brings up the entire latent character of the person." Hence while some in this case suddenly seem to grow worse and worse, others suddenly grow better, deeper, broader, and finer. It is customary to look at the shadow in these matters. While it is true that the majority of men are inherently bad, there are examples of the opposite. The study of occultism does not destroy rules of right and wrong, but the student, having opened up the fires below the surface, may be easily carried away in the sudden heat engendered. The dweller of the threshold in *Zanoni* is no fiction. It is ever with each student, for it is the baser part of humanity that he begins in real earnest as never before to fight. At the same time, the brightly shining Adonai is also there to help and save if we will let that be done. Karma that might not operate except after years or lives is called upon and falls, as H.P.B. has so clearly stated, in one mass upon the head of him who has called upon immutable law. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and, rushing in before they have the slightest idea of their own character even on its surface, they are often destroyed. But the practice of altruism is not by itself occultism, though it saves from danger and prepares one for another incarnation in some body and age when everything will favor us. We have yet left some few hundred thousand of mortal years, and ought not to be too precipitate.

—THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, December, 1889

STUDIES IN KARMA

I: War—Past and Present

SINCE the turn of the century, the whole world has become a gigantic laboratory for perfecting the processes of war, "peace" being merely an interlude for partial recovery and re-armament. Morally, war is the violent precipitation on the physical plane of the many psychic maladjustments of this cycle. For the theosophist, therefore, it presents the most complete of all case-studies in collective Karma. With respect to the individual, war compels him to make important choices which are powerful determinants of his own future karma, as well as that of his nation and the world. In an area of great emotional pressure, he is confronted by the collective-karma problems of his age and by the responsibility of choosing *for himself* a course of constructive individual action.

Theosophy is a philosophy and not a religion. It has only one "commandment" to its students on the subject of war: that the individual shall do all in his power to fully understand the nature of the war situation, so that his conduct during the human storm shall be based on a perception of the underlying karmic relationships between the war and the evolution of the human soul.

In an effort to grasp the meaning of war, so that he may *consciously* fulfill the special duties it imposes, the Theosophical student is able to recognize a somewhat faltering parallel trend in the mind of the race. During the past thirty years, students of the humanities, historians and sociologists, reached a conscious determination to discover the *causes* of wars, so that man may move to eliminate or at least control them. The United States, less subject than other nations to external military threats, contributed greatly to such objective study of war. While the average high-school textbook still treats of ancient wars as simple events in military history—modern wars, of which intensive study begins with first college year, are now considered in the framework of rudimentary sociological investigation. The underlying factors that make for war receive some attention, and this, for the race mind, provides a partial entry into the study of Karma. One of the first principles of historical truth thus begins to emerge: that all wars must be referred to the soil from which they grew—to the economic, political, and psychological conditions which prepared the ground for the tread of marching men.

There are at least two reasons for the distinction between the old method of study used in "covering" a period of ancient or medieval conflict, and the sociological analysis applied to later wars. First, the modern war has become more obviously a sociological phenomenon, since all the processes of a society must be geared to co-operation for the production of armaments and the training and equipping of soldiers. To select an arbitrary point in history to indicate this trend, it might be said that the Napoleonic wars introduced "totalitarianism" for military purposes, after the Revolution had created the nationalist spirit which integrated political and military operations.

For the enlarged populations of post-medieval national states, whose specialized skills needed co-ordination in the event of war, it began to be increasingly necessary for governments to present the war as *desirable* from the standpoint of the interests of the citizen, not simply as demanded on the personal caprice of a ruler. War became, with this development, a complex social process, knit into unity by a popular ideology.

A second reason for the newer and more mature outlook on nationalist wars lies in the fact that practical students of the humanities rebelled at arid and uninteresting recitations of events. They grew interested in the social *processes* which linked the past with the life of their own times. It became the obligation of the historian to expose those implications of past events which were relevant to education for the needs of the present and the future. History passed from a descriptive to an explanatory phase. Not simply "what," but the how and why of human events, were now the field of history. Not events, but their influence, were studied: the causes of wars and changes of government were sought in the complexes of total societies. These pioneer historians manifested the same spirit of freedom which had once impelled Renaissance scholars to rise above the intellectual sterility resulting from centuries of Catholic "totalitarianism."

During the nineteenth century, the method of studying the *processes* of society received considerable impetus from a French historian, Michelet, as well as from Hegel and Karl Marx. The first notable evidence of the sociological approach to history was in the relatively unexplored field of economic forces as causes of political events. Discovery in this direction was inspired by the desire to extract the *truth* from history, and the resulting great emphasis on the economic interpretation merely indicated the appalling failure of earlier historians to consider this most obvious

of factors in the problem of war and peace. Apparent to Theosophical students, however, is another reason for this enthusiasm for the economic interpretation of history: Materialism—the characteristic bias of modern times. Economics played a part in inaugurating sociological study of modern history, but it was too limited to give a well-balanced understanding. For instance, Karl Marx, half-mystic and half-reformer, and angry champion of the oppressed proletariat of all nations, made the economic motive supremely important in his analysis of social change, while he, himself, failed entirely to be interested in either money or security. In the early twentieth century, the economic interpretation of history received more balanced attention from historians such as Charles Beard, Sidney Bradshaw Fay, Allan Nevins, and Carl Becker.

Some ten years after the Western front of 1918 had become quiet, college students in America were being taught that World War I was an economic war. International munitions makers were ruthlessly exposed by techniques similar to those employed by the "muckraking liberals" of the pre-war period. In England, 130,000 people signed a pledge never to bear arms or to produce munitions in another international conflict, while many German people responded similarly. But the true understanding of so sobering a phenomenon as World War I increased but little. Students who signed pledges never to support war had simply substituted "international munitions makers" for "Germans" in their lexicon of dislike. At least, for many thus "enlightened," the fundamental truth remained obscure. It was not realized that no *single* class, any more than any single individual or nation, makes possible a modern war. War is not, nor has it been for generations, so personal a matter. Neither the Germans nor the international munitions makers exclusively caused World War I. "Good" and "Bad" individuals and groups there certainly were, who contributed substantially to its occurrence, but the closest approximation to historical truth is probably to say that the social machinery of six great modern states left so many gears and moving parts unaligned that these parts eventually began to fly about, frightening the nations into becoming strongholds of militarism.

Versailles was a peace manifesting the desire of the victor nations to prove that there had been nothing wrong with *their* social machinery, but only with the machinery of the nations charged with war guilt. Yet the most eminent of all World War historians, Sidney B. Fay, has since declared, the scholarly world

assenting, that Germany was less responsible, and two other nations much more to blame, for World War I than had been at first supposed. Versailles expressed the spirit of Decatur's phrase, "My country, right or wrong," which, as a partially articulate philosophy as well as an emotional attitude, found considerable formal approval during World War II.

Pacifistic Norman Angell wrote in 1935 a volume entitled *Peace and the Plain Man,* clearly indicating the author's opinion that the social conditions of the warring nations were all substantially the same, that the same techniques of propaganda had been used for conditioning the populations to co-operate in military effort. Books such as Angell's, and Petersen's *Propaganda for War* (1939), helped to overcome the naïve belief that the war-making process or political morality were fundamentally different among any of the nations whose millions had died on the battlefield. Mr. Angell also contended that the war was a farce from the standpoint of the preservation of genuine national interests, since every nation "lost the war."

In 1941, Mr. Angell, then a holder of the Nobel Peace Prize, wrote *Let the People Know.* Here he asserted that Nazi Germany —a considerably less democratic Germany than that of 1914— actually *did* threaten the national self-interest of both England and the United States. The waging of war itself, Mr. Angell had already said, was an act of injustice against humanity. Confronted by the Nazi menace, however, he felt compelled to argue that the war was necessary because national self-interest was threatened: "The first and last claim of a nation, as of every living thing, is to be able to do injustice in order to defend its existence." On this frank and unashamed basis, he urged that men of the democratic nations should fight their war—realistically.

It is worth while to pause and to examine this justification of war, for Mr. Angell speaks for many who felt that going "all-out" for the late war was in conformity with the natural laws of man, *simply on the basis he provides.* He says that whenever self-interest and self-preservation are *really* threatened—regardless of the degree of our own underlying responsibility for circumstances —we are free to commit injustice, as a course preferable to being victims of it ourselves.

Here is the final, plausible and undoubtedly sincere outgrowth of the psychology of Materialism: man's morality can never, according to the fundamental order of things, avoid compromise with "reality." And if man is indeed an animal, a creature of

physical, rather than a creator of moral, evolution, no other conclusion is tenable. Yet the Theosophist is unalterably opposed to this conclusion, both in principle and from an individual willingness to substitute self-sacrifice for self-preservation. Self-preservation, wrote H. P. Blavatsky, "is a 'pretended' law indeed, as far as the human family is concerned, and a fiction of the most dangerous kind . . . for it is a policy of mutual homicide, because men by descending to its practical application among themselves, merge more and more by a retrograde reinvolution into the animal kingdom." (THEOSOPHY I, 201.)

Whether one accepts or rejects the military as a vehicle for expressing part of his obligation to humanity is of secondary importance. That he *chooses his part consciously,* as an individual, is imperative, if the results of moral inertia and the accompanying "decay into materialism" are finally to be overcome. The theosophist who fights in a modern war must have better reasons for fighting than most of his fellows—who simply submit to the apparent necessity of following orders. And the theosophist who rejects war must reject it for better reasons than those of most pacifists. Transition out of Kali Yuga will come only with the awakening of the Buddhi-Manas of the race, and this, in turn, will take place only when individuals develop the courage of convictions that transcend the moral level of the time.

There can be no Theosophical dogmas regarding participation or non-participation in war. Theosophical principles are for individual application. They commit their devotee to one thing only—finding the highest course of practical action possible to *him* in the prevailing social order, the most complete fulfillment of his duty to the whole of humanity. But, since the social environment changes constantly during the cycles of race evolution, is is imprudent for anyone to say that he would have refused to participate in every war which the government of his nation favors. The Theosophist can neither withdraw to an "ivory tower," forgetful of the bonds of duty which unite him with his fellows, nor can he fail to realize that he must often choose a unique way of fulfilling his highest duty to all humanity. He must, at least *internally,* stand out and be separate.

INDIAN DAYS

A Dialogue of Life and Death

[H. P. Blavatsky's travels in India, after the T.S. headquarters were established there in 1879, had many curious bypaths, and even more of a mystery to her companions than the ruins of ancient India were the "caves and jungles" of human nature they encountered on the way. H.P.B. had travelled thus half the years of her life and several times around the world, viewing among many races evidence of the inner powers of man and of the occult forces of nature. Reading *Isis Unveiled* one joins its author on a number of these strange journeys and witnesses the remarkable feats of magic she understood. Two dramatic instances (*Isis* I, 595-8 and II, 598-602) suggest what were some of H.P.B.'s own powers that entitled her to such revelations and demonstrations.

A much greater company shared the experiences of the Indian tours, however, than actually travelled with H.P.B., for, as Col. Olcott relates (*Theosophist*, XIV, 245), "When we first came to Bombay, H.P.B. employed her leisure time in writing, for the *Russki Vyestnik*, a series of sketchy letters descriptive of the landscapes, peoples, feelings and traditions of India and the Indian; spicing and immensely increasing the interest of her narrative by weaving into it the story of a long journey by a select party of us, in the company of an Adept whose wisdom instructed and psychical powers astounded us." Certain of the tales, Col. Olcott continues, "relate to and are souvenirs of a former journey of hers, from Southern India to Tibet, when she was really in the company and under the protection of the Adept whom she personifies under the *sobriquet* of Gulab Sing—a real name of a real Adept. . . ."

"Indian Days," here reprinted for the first time in this magazine, belongs to the same cycle as *Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, extracts from which were published in THEOSOPHY, July to November, 1944. The present series was translated from the Russian by Vera Jelikhovsky Johnston (who also translated the *Caves*) for publication in the *Theosophical Forum*, May, 1889. —Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

THE heat was unbearable the day we spent in D——. It was so hot that one was inclined to suspect that Surya meant to bake the Jats, who are his faithful worshippers, alive, as well as ourselves, who so constantly cursed his too scorching caresses. The glaring rays of sun poured liquid gold on the marble walls and cupolas of the Kiosks, lay in blinding spots on the slumbering waters of the tanks, and darted dazzling arrows

into everything, living or dead. Even the flocks of parrots and peacocks, which are as plentiful in the gardens of India as sparrows in our Russian cabbage beds, were forced to hide in the thickest part of the shubbery.

Great was the silence around us. Everything slept, tingling with heat and languor. We took refuge in a marble summer house, lofty and well hidden under the thick trees, so that we enjoyed under this peaceful shelter a sort of comparative coolness. It stood in the middle of a small pond, protected and darkened by various creepers. While there, it was impossible to feel either weary or over heated. Here was a haven of shadow and coolness, but outside the limit of the miniature lake, a regular Hades of heat lay ablaze. The very ground seemed to crackle and open in numberless chinks, under the flaming kisses of the formidable spring sun. His rays, like fiery tongues, licked the foliage of the garden, still luxurious but already fading.

Roses pressed their petals together or shed them on the ground. Even the lotus and the water lily curled the edges of their thick, hardy leaves, as if gingerly avoiding the burning touch.

Orchids alone, "those blossoms of passion," lifted high their many-colored, insect-like chalices, drinking in this torrent of fire as other flowers drink in refreshing dew.

What an original and lovely garden! It was set on a dead rock measuring hardly an acre, but containing over two hundred large and small fountains. The keeper, a clean-shaven old man, all sugar in words and manner, assured us that only a part of the fountains were playing, many being out of order and stopped; but that on the day of a great reception in D——, that of the Prince of Wales, if I am not mistaken, there were six hundred of them. However, we were perfectly satisfied with the two hundred. For a few rupees the gardeners enabled us to feel deliciously cool during the hottest hours of the day, and when the night came, to walk along a path which was bordered with high sprays of fresh water instead of trees. I have never seen anything comparable to these two walls of water-dust sparkling in the moonlight and passing through all the shades of the rainbow.

Almost abandoned by human beings, the lovely garden is running wild, given over as it is to the sole use of an army of magnificent peacocks, which are also getting as wild as the garden. The favorite birds of Juno, whom India calls Sarasvati, fill the garden, hundreds of them composedly pacing up and down the path, sweeping with their long tails the accumulation of dry leaves

and rubbish which evidently had not been removed from the path for years. The birds are strung along the branches of the trees like so many beads, giving to the old garden the appearance of an enchanted wood in some fairy-land. In the glare of an Indian day, the shaggy old trees move as if expanding and contracting in gentle breathing, and thousands of inquisitive eyes peep at you from behind the thick foliage, sparkling like huge blue sapphires, with reflections of gold. These are the eyes on the tails of the restless peacocks, ever moving on the branches.

The first time I entered the garden, I stood aghast a long while utterly unable to account for this strange phantasmagoria. But as soon as my curiosity took the shape of action and I moved forward to examine the wonder more closely, I had to suffer the consequences of my rashness. One of the peacocks, frightened by my approach, darted past me, and in his heavy flight, not only knocked the sun hat off my head, but myself as well off my feet. So my reflections on the theme of the wonders of India were interrupted. The exploration of the garden, however, soothed my feelings and the Babu avenged my fall by tearing a whole handful of bright feathers from the tail of another peacock. "A souvenir from D——," he said. He did not seem to be in the least moved by the consideration that his victim was perfectly innocent, having taken no part in the offence.

The garden is cut in all directions by a regular network of narrow paths. These were going to be cleaned, the gardener explained to us, but not before he heard about some new "distinguished visitor" having started for D——; which led us to conclude, with our usual insight, that we were not included in the category of those lucky people. In all directions we saw waters peacefully slumbering in their nests of marble, snugly covered with thick blankets of green scum. The receptacles of the fountains, the ponds and miniature lakes had long turned into a sort of green gruel. Only the waterworks right in front of the palace are regularly attended to, and add immensely to the beauty of the lovely wood. In spite of its neglected appearance, the octagonal pond in the center, where we were taking refuge, is especially beautiful. Surrounded by smaller fountains with their high sprays flying into the air from the bowers of luxuriant tropical growth, we spent a blissful day, as if in some aquatic kingdom. Four avenues of waterworks lead crosswise to the pond and you reach the Kiosk which sheltered us, by going over four little bridges with lace-like parapets of white marble.

We were tired of talking, and sat in silence; each of us was left to his own reflections and occupations. I was trying to read, but my thoughts turned more to the Thakur than to the contents of the book. With his head half hidden by the thick foliage of some creeper, and only his long white beard protruding, our respected chief, Colonel O., was snoring gently. Narayan and Mulji crouched on the floor and the Babu, taking the place of some absent idol, sat with his legs crossed, on the high pedestal and to all appearances was also snoozing.

We sat on, half dozing, motionless and silent for a long while. At last towards half past five, the slumbering gardens began to wake up. The heat grew less; the peacocks crawled out of their hiding places and flocks of golden-green parrots called out to each other on the tops of the trees. A few moments more and the sun will disappear under the distant line of the salt lakes. Then exhausted nature will be granted a respite until next morning and will grow cool for the new ordeal by fire.

I put my book by, and looked around with increased interest, everything beginning to breathe freely and to move. The garden, the very image of Daniel's fiery furnace a moment ago, was now turning into a grove in some classical idyl. But in vain would one look for troops of merry nymphs playfully throwing water at each other; in vain would one listen for the gay notes of Pan's piping. The limpid waters of the tank reflected only the deep blue sky, and the peacocks roosting on the lace-like bridges. Preparing for sleep, they played with their tails like so many Spanish ladies with their fans; they spread them and then shut them again, admiringly looking at their own images reflected in the water below. At last, having sent us a few more golden rays, the sun departed and a faint cooling breeze began to reach us. It was so pleasant in our summer house, so cool and quiet, that we decidedly refused to go into the stuffy halls of the palace for dinner, and asked for our food to be served to us where we were, deputing the Babu to settle the matter.

The frisky Bengali would not go over the bridge. He said he recognized the peacock he had plundered, sitting right on the balustrade, and feared the bird's revenge. So it would fare better with him if he took a safer and a shorter way to the shore, which he did by plunging head foremost into the water directly from the pedestal on which he was enthroned throughout the afternoon. The noise of the splashing water startled the Colonel, who said

he wanted to know whether the Babu meant to get drowned, plunging into unknown waters in this foolhardy way.

"Better to get drowned, than to risk the revenge of an infuriated *glamour!*" shouted the latter, noisily blowing the water from his mouth and nostrils.

"What glamour?" asked our president, pacified by the fact that the water hardly reached the Babu's chest.

"Why, the accursed peacock, of course. I have recognized him for a certainty for the same bird who visited us yesterday in Burtpore," went on the Bengali at the top of his voice, stepping with great difficulty on the muddy bed of the tank. "Do you think that I did not notice the pretended bird and Mulji exchanging meaning glances behind my back!"

"A very round-about way of making fun of me," said the "General" frowning. "This *Nastika* never believed in anything, laughing at everything on earth."

"Well, now is your opportunity to laugh at him. Just look at him!" I said, bursting into laughter.

Indeed the Babu was a sight! With an effort he extricated himself from the mud, and climbing the high white marble banks, left behind him long streaks of greenish mud. Covered with mud and weeds all over, he had lost his likeness to humanity.

"You are like a drowned man, my poor Babu," I said laughingly. "It is the second bath you have taken today. The water has a wonderful attraction for you. Surely after death you will be turned into a water spirit; but I hope you will escape death by drowning."

"What I was, that I am and that I shall be," he answered, quoting one of the aphorisms of his all-denying sect. "Dust I was, dust I shall be, and besides they say that drowning is a very pleasant death, Mem-Sahib."

"Who you *are,* everybody sees; what you *shall be,* I do not know, but undoubtedly in your last incarnation you were a Newfoundland puppy!" retorted Mulji.

But the remark was lost on the Babu. He evidently was a little ashamed of his looks, and ran towards the house at full speed.

Were Narayan right and were I actually endowed with the gift of prophesy, as he pretended, I would rather have swallowed my own tongue than have given utterance to my last remark. Poor

boy, little did he think that an untimely and painful death was in store for him in the yellow waters of the Ganges. It is five years since I saw him last, and two since his terrible accident, but I can never think about him and the pleasant days we spent together without feeling sad, sad at heart. I often dream—only too often—of his fragile, child-like little body emerging from the water all covered with the green-black mud of that tank at D——. It seems to me I can see his eyes fixed on mine inquiringly, those eyes of his so full of light and mischief then, glazed and dim a long time now. It seems to me I can hear my own remark, "I hope you will escape death by drowning," and his light-hearted answer, "what I was, that I shall be; dust I was, dust I shall be," and I wake up shuddering with horror and pity.

The poor fellow was drowned in the most horrible, and at the same time ridiculous manner. Between Dehra Dan and Haridwar the Ganges is not the great river it becomes further on, but a mad torrent which is as swift as it is shallow. In one place especially, the river is to be crossed only with the aid of a small footbridge, while the horses must be led, their legs only partly covered by the water. But in spite of all warning, the Babu would cross over on horseback. The horse was soon knocked off its legs, and the boy could not free himself for some reason or other, most probably his foot having got entangled in the stirrup. The mad torrent dragged both horse and rider over a mile, until they finally disappeared, having reached a place where the river forms an abrupt waterfall.

"But is it really possible? Has he actually become dust?" I often ask myself when my thoughts turn to the past, and invariably my mind turns to another conversation, a conversation which took place only a few days after our pleasant stay in D——, and which may throw some light on the insoluble enigma of death. As usual, Narayan and the Babu came to disagree on some important point and asked Thakur to help them out of their difficulties.

I have written down this remarkable conversation in full as I remember it, in the hopes that serious readers may profit by it. Not that it definitely settled questions which to me personally are a constant torment; but it gives a complete idea of the point of view from which the best philosophy of the East considers life beyond the grave, its mysteries, and, in general, the soul of man.

(To be continued.)

ASPECTS OF SEERSHIP

> The veil which covers the face of futurity is woven by the hand of mercy. —BULWER LYTTON

THE morpho-genetic field which modern psychology and biology have observed in their study of embryonic development has its extension in the wider reaches of man's psychical nature. The electrical and magnetic processes that have been noted in all foetal formation are but mutual and reciprocal relations in a living body whose principle of growth must be sought behind the screen of physical completion. The key to the mystery of organic growth, in the case of man, is to be found in his sevenfold nature. In that septenary division, the psychic factors are of paramount importance, particularly to a world which, in some of its phases, appears once again to be entering a cycle of degradation. *Kama-manas* is very much in evidence today—a composite constituent, wherein exist both the line of demarcation separating the mortal man from the immortal entity, and a dual principle gravitating, in its essence, either downwards to the desire nature or upwards to the spiritual ego. Familiar physical forces have their correspondences in the human principles on every plane, just as the human principles themselves are "correlated to seven-fold occult forces—those of the higher planes being of tremendous power." Because of this the Teachers are reticent in revealing such a teaching as the evolution of the planetary chains. For principles are related to planes, planets, and races of men, and "any septenary division at once gives a clue to tremendous occult powers, the abuse of which would cause incalculable evil to humanity." (*S.D.* I, xxxv.)

It is only against this background of a "total" evolution that we may hope to achieve some clarity in understanding the nature and function of seership in its various forms. Soothsayer, in the sense of a seer who is especially a prognosticator or diviner, is derived from an old Anglo-Saxon word *soth* (from the root *-es*, to be), or sooth, originally meaning truth or reality. Only later did it come to bear an interpretation of cajolery or blandishment. In its origin and declension, this ancient term has encompassed the whole history of the rise and fall of seership.

The evolution of the essentially human principle of mind centres largely upon its mission to overcome in ever-increasing measure the illusory elements that cling to its necessary association with matter in the physical world. In proportion to the success of its efforts in this direction, and the consequential purification of the

perceptive faculties, there is seen the difference between true seership and its alloy—the one depending upon noëtic action, the other upon terrestrial psychism and mediumship. Acquisition of the former is conditional on "paralysing at will the *memory* and the instinctual, independent action of all the material organs and even cells in the body of flesh"—an act which "requires an adept." Alternatively, by extreme purity of life in this and previous births, a seer may have arrived at almost "a Yogi-state of holiness and saintship," or, through weakness and exhaustion of the physical body through illness and suffering, the plane of the higher *Manas* is reached occasionally in mystic visions. We have been told that the Seeress of Prevorst* was an example of the last-mentioned division, and Jacob Boehme of the second. "In all other cases of abnormal seership, of so-called clairaudience, clairvoyance, and trances, it is simply—*mediumship,*" writes H. P. Blavatsky in "Psychic and Noetic Action" (THEOSOPHY XXVIII, 206 and 254).

There is no equivocation or evasion possible with regard to these categorical statements, and much harm has been done by ignoring them. The "revelations" of psychics and seers have lured many students away from that Esoteric Philosophy which "entirely loses sight of personalities, dogmatic beliefs, and special religions," and which "is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life" (*S.D.* I, xx). A modern soothsayer is, in the majority of cases, a master of blandishment, if nothing else, and never tires of proclaiming his own personal achievements. Anthropologically, such a person is not far removed from the *mandiva* (or medium) of Uganda, whose frenzy is superinduced by the lower form of artificial aids. Roscoe, in his *Baganda,* tells us that, formerly, the Kings of Uganda had a *mandiva* appointed after their death, who, from time to time, was possessed by the spirit of departed royalty. We are here in the presence of the civilized "apostolic succession" doctrine in its original form! In another direction, it has been noted that nervous diseases are very prevalent in Eastern Siberia, and that the Tungus are especially susceptible to epilepsy. Shaman is said to be a Tungus word, and it is only natural that the Tungus Shamans should be afflicted with this dread disease to some extent (*Poetry and Prophecy*, by N. Kershaw Chadwick, Cambridge University Press, 1942).

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*Frau Frederica Hauffe, whose experiences were related by Justinus Kerner in *Die Seherin von Prevorst,* 1829.

Not much attention was paid to the references made by H. P. Blavatsky in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 625) to the Shamans* of Siberia—"*mediums* in the full sense of the word," and, she added, "all ignorant and illiterate." Nor was her knowledge recognized when she said they were a sect of the old Bhon religion of Tibet. Miss Chadwick, however, in her authoritative work, when contrasting Shamanism as practiced among the Altai Tatars with that known farther north in Siberia, where, during fits of inspiration, the Shaman speaks languages unknown to him, tells us that "the whole matter is closely paralleled by the practice of the lamas and Bön priests of Tibet, who, in their incantations, make use of corrupt Sanskrit formulae which they do not understand." Mediumship, it will be seen, has a long ancestry, as H.P.Blavatsky insistently pointed out.

The evidence is overwhelming that there are two kinds of seership—psychical and spiritual (noëtic). As in the case of the *Siddhis,* the abnormal powers in man: "One group embraces the lower, coarse, psychic and mental energies; the other is one which exacts the highest training of Spiritual powers" (*Voice of the Silence,* I, fn. 1). The artificial processes recognized as necessary to induce varying psychical states are comparatively easy to acquire. They are quite foreign to the qualifications prescribed from time immemorial for the student who would put himself "upon the path which leads to the knowledge of what is good to do, as to the right discrimination of good from evil; a path which also leads a man to that power through which he can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting a finger." (H. P. Blavatsky, "Practical Occultism," THEOSOPHY XXXI, 101.) Even in the distinctive class of prophetic seership, we find a division into conscious prophecies by those who are able to look into the astral light, and predictions made unconsciously by the "inspired." In the latter order we are asked to place the modern trance speakers no less than some Biblical prophets (*Isis Unveiled,* I, 201). Orthodox ecclesiasticism has been troubled with this division, even though it has always been at pains to deny the validity of the phenomena. Some of the prophets of Israel refused to approve of any form of sacrificial worship, and, like the Gnostics who contended against the Christian Fathers, were in opposition to the priesthood of their day. "But these prophets," remarks H. P. Blavatsky, "who opposed themselves to human sacrifices were all

*A series of pictures of Shaman costumes is in Holmberg's *Finno-Ugrian and Siberian Mythology,* Boston, Mass. 1927.

nazars and *initiates*." (*Isis*, II, 525.) Through all epochs the dichotomy persists. The presence of the counterfeit presupposes the existence of the genuine. The charlatans are ever the natural shields of the true adept in the Sacred Science.

The two paths thus portrayed are concomitants of all phases of evolutionary development. The discerning may see them equally in studies of the customs of "primitive" peoples. There are traditional forms of utterances made under artificial inspiration, just as much oral poetry and saga—as well as the use of symbols—points to a diviner wisdom obtainable only through a strict spiritual regimen. If there are still those who practice condescension to "uncivilized" races, they may be referred to some very wise words of one writer on these subjects:

> The knowledge of writing, and the ease and swiftness with which knowledge can be transmitted by this means, have sometimes obscured the intellectual achievements of people in a less advanced stage of material culture. (N. Kershaw Chadwick, *op. cit.*)

Indeed, this expert goes further, and suggests that part of the value of the oral traditions and culture of communities on the outer edge of the world, is that "they have preserved for us, not the primitive experiments of early man, but reflections of the long forgotten spiritual life and art of the great civilizations of the past." We are reminded of H. P. Blavatsky's statement, in a reference to the darkness which faces geologists and anthropologists in observing prehistoric ages:

> They are "prehistoric" to the naked eye of matter only. To the spiritual eagle eye of the seer and the prophet of every race, Ariadne's thread stretches beyond that "historic period" without break or flaw, surely and steadily, into the very night of time; and the hand which holds it is too mighty to drop it, or even let it break. (*S.D.* II, 67.)

The *mandiva* phenomena of Uganda are counterbalanced by the dirges and other poems recited by the seeresses in North Borneo. These are said to conduct the souls of the dead to their future abode (*Sarawak Museum Journal*, vol. I, 1911, quoted by Chadwick, *op. cit.*). Both in their story and treatment they are considered closely to resemble other themes of a more or less magical nature, such as those of the Tatar shamans, the prose stories in an eighth century Japanese chronicle *Kojiki*, a large body of modern Polynesian saga, and the narrative prose and poetry of Ladakh, Tibet, and Mongolia. Here, again, we have that element of universality which distinguishes all branches of mystery and dogma

(so often materialized), and which were made, in the pages of *The Secret Doctrine*, to merge back into their original element.

In European literature, glimpses of one division of seership are easily found. The Odyssey opens with the invocation: "Tell me, O Muse." Hesiod openly announced the source of his inspiration as being the Muses, daughters of "Memory" (cf. *The Key to Theosophy*, sec. VIII, "What is Memory according to Theosophical Teaching"). Some scholars assert that the mantic art was developed and elaborated among the early Celtic peoples to an amazing degree. In Norse prophetic tradition, *Wod-en* has been thought to mean "an inspired person." Attention has been drawn to the close likeness, in many respects, of the intellectual classes of Ancient Gaul with the Brahmins of India, especially in their educational systems, the type of their speculations, and their forest life aimed at seclusion. There is ground for the belief that the link was made through Thrace, Greece, and Etruria. In fact, the functions of the seer were practically universal in Early Europe, and, long before the close of the first millennium, the art had endowed the Celtic and Teutonic peoples with a rich store of legend. On this point, H. P. Blavatsky declared that the identity of doctrine in the case of Druids and the Orphic priesthood of Thrace was due to their connection, in the esoteric teachings, with the universal Wisdom Religion. This is also the origin of the marked affinities in the varying forms of exoteric worship in all traditions (*S.D.* II, 756). The Perceptive Mysteries have always existed: "there were great seers and prophets in olden times who were enabled to perceive the mystery of Breath and Motion retrospectively, when the systems of worlds were at rest, and plunged in their periodic sleep." (*S.D.* I, 116 fn.)

The lesson is clear. He who would follow the true path of seership, with or without a temperamental attraction to "the celestial science," must be prepared to face materialistic scepticism and bigoted obloquy. Above all, he will know that *Atma-Vidya*, knowledge of the soul, "is the only kind of Occultism that any theosophist . . . who would be wise and unselfish, ought to strive after." He must be prepared to be called, at best, a devotee of "Spiritism,"a term of opprobium used to designate all phenomena which have not the imprimatur of a scientific or theological hierarchy. He will be comforted, however, by the thought that facts are stubborn things, and, as long as they exist, so will there be open-minded students who are prepared "to know, to dare, to will, and to be silent."

YOUTH-COMPANIONS AT HOME

THE Family gathered in the living-room after dinner, looking forward to an evening at home. Chris was the last to arrive this time, but the first to speak:

"What I'd like to know," he began, "is why we sometimes have such good talks together, and straighten things out, and other times we end up in a rousing Family Argument. I mean," he persisted, "why is it that when we talk about things which we aren't too interested in personally, we seem to get further than we do when we're trying to settle something which affects us very much? You'd think that the more important the thing we were discussing, the more we'd make of it."

"That's a good thing to wonder about," said Father, "because if what you say is true, we tend to confuse the crucial issues, and that shows that we haven't learned enough about standing aside from our feelings. It means we're still identifying ourselves with conditions."

"Well, it's *natural* to get excited about the things that mean most to us!" Madge exclaimed. "—even if we can't always be impersonal about them," she added, inclining at the moment to leniency in her view of human nature.

"We're bound to agree with you there," laughed Mother. "But still, we *can* take our faults too tolerantly, don't you think?—borrowing the old excuse that we're poor, weak, miserable sinners who can't be expected to perform miracles in the face of our inherent imperfection."

"That's true enough," admitted Madge. "And aren't we usually aware when our 'personal' is running away with our 'impersonal'? For that matter," she added, ruefully, "we don't always *lose* control of ourselves—sometimes we deliberately hand over the controls to the personal. I suppose it's a form of self-indulgence, but everybody knows there have been times when he's *allowed* himself to get angry, not because he couldn't help it, but because he didn't especially care to."

"Wait a minute, there," said Paul, a little truculently. The Family could almost hear the rustle of imaginary shirt sleeves being rolled up for a fight. "I think we have to find a couple of new words just about here, if we're going to use 'personal' to indicate something bad. We always seem to make it the opposite of

'impersonal'—and I think that makes our ideas about both words a bit fuzzy.

"Impersonality is a personal achievement, just as integrity is," he continued. "It isn't just the exclusive possession of a certain group of people, or of an institution, and it doesn't consist in always saying 'we' instead of 'I.' Seems to me that we can appear very deliberate and 'impersonal,' yet be impelled by the most personal feelings. And a person can seem very excited, shout, and throw his hands about, but still be actually impersonal."

"Yes," agreed Father, "provided that no matter how excited he becomes, he doesn't forget that what he is trying to get at is the *truth,* and not somebody else's weaknesses. As a matter of fact," he added, with reckless candor, "the practical truth for us in any situation—whether or not we discover it—is our *own* weakness."

Madge called a halt at this point. "Let me catch up a bit, will you? Are you saying now that it's all right to get excited about things? I thought that was what we started off wanting to correct!"

"So far we've decided that if we *have* to get excited, we ought to get excited about ideas and not about people," Mother reported.

"That's it," said Paul. "Actually, the personal is the only attitude we *can* take and be completely honest. We can't speak for another person or a group of people on anything, really. All *I* can say is what *I* think, and the most important thing I can do is to speak my convictions honestly and take the responsibility for them."

But before Paul's oratory could lead him to belabor the obvious, and "squeeze the last drop out of a foregone conclusion," Madge quickly interposed.

"Well, there you're using 'personal' as we use 'individual' in Theosophy, and no one will argue with you when you say that the *individual* position is the only one we can take. I suppose you would say that the individuality is really impersonal, and if *we* want to be impersonal, we do it not simply by avoiding personalities, but by searching for what lies behind the personalities. Right?"

Father nodded. "We can't judge impersonality by appearances. If we watch *ourselves,* and watch our intent in any situation, we'll know how much impersonality we have. If we're trying to

'get back' at someone, or discredit another's argument in order to discredit *him*—put him in an embarrassing position—then we can be pretty sure that we're being personal, no matter how calm and detached we seem."

"—Because we're seeking out a *person,* and not a wrong idea," said Chris, adding ingenuously, "It sure is good to know that even when I get excited, I'm not necessarily being personal!"

"Not necessarily," repeated Paul, laying no stress on the last word, but still managing to convey the magnitude of his reservations on that score.

"Well, Paul," Mother remarked, "you were speaking about people who seem impersonal and detached, but who are actually more petty and personal than some who show a great deal of emotion. Don't we always sense that false impersonality? When we're upset or angry about something, a person can make us still angrier just by flaunting his imperviousness."

"Isn't that because he makes us ashamed of our behavior by contrast with his own?" said Madge, doubtfully. "We resent a person who is doing what we know we *ought* to be doing and aren't."

"I don't know about that." It was Father who spoke. "What we call impersonality can be just another form of personality with holier-than-thou overtones, and that can cause a great deal of resentment. I don't suppose you could resent one who was completely impersonal—you'd have nothing personal to take offense at."

"But every *person* has to have a personality—there's no getting away from that," Madge objected. "All we can say is that personal resentment is never *returned* by the impersonal man. He cannot prevent bad feelings in another, even though he doesn't permit them in himself."

"That's what is so wrong about condemning people, isn't it?" said Chris. "Aside from the fact that we can never judge another correctly—know his motives, I mean."

"We often say that if we focus on a person's faults we strengthen them, but I think you discover after a while that by paying attention to personality instead of character, you *call out* faults in the other fellow," Mother suggested. "After all, our faults *are* our personalities—our limitations—and that's what we should be helping each other to move away from."

"Well, speaking personally," drawled Chris, grinning at the Family as he started upstairs, "sure has its uses."

CONSCIOUSNESS, INTELLIGENCE, AND THEIR VEHICLE

WERE it possible to know the source of consciousness, a knowledge of the true nature of man and the universe would follow as day follows night. Although every act is dependent upon conscious life, practically nothing is known about consciousness except that it is, and that we are thus enabled to perceive. The vehicle of conscious activity, the body, and the organ of intellect, the mind, may, however, be studied in regard to the functioning of consciousness.

Consciousness is the basis of intellect and, on this plane, establishes active life in the body, but in itself it remains an abstraction which must be taken for granted. The cause for this position, which we are forced to accept, lies in the hidden source of consciousness upon higher spiritual planes of being which the imperfect mind cannot conceive—much less perceive.

Pragna, the Sanskrit name for consciousness—the capacity for perception—was not a mystery to the ancient philosophers whose works are dealt with in the *Secret Doctrine*. There we find the enumeration of seven planes of consciousness, and seven states within man, only three of which are known to him in his daily cycle of twenty-four hours. Two of these three states, those of waking and dreaming, can be studied, but to the average mind, the third or deep sleep state is not a state of consciousness. While the ideation of higher manas during deep sleep is too spiritual for the brain to participate in and thus remember, a symbolic dream may reveal to the waking mind—as the ego reclaims his vehicle at waking time—something of the soul's activities during the night. That the soul leaves the body during deep sleep is not the teaching, but neither is the soul "in" the body during conscious life here. Rather, its position is analogous to that of the operator at a telephone switch-board who uses lines which connect with points both near and far.

To the occultist, searching the causal plane, thoughts are realities. To the materialist a thought is unreal, transient, without body or substance, having a negligible effect unless applied to action on the plane of the senses. But the trained intelligence is enabled to operate on more than one plane. Each plane used has its substance, its energies, and therefore its realities. Thought on its own plane of ratiocination becomes that plane's substantial reality. The more intense the ideation, the more it is engraved

upon the memory. A deeply impressed thought returns again and again to the conscious mind, and becomes a motivating factor in the life of the individual. The substance of the fifth state thus becomes the seed or mould for the conscious, intelligent life of man upon the plane of his vehicle, the body.

The body is the least permanent of the vehicles used by the reincarnating ego. It is constantly changing. There is not a moment during which it is exactly the same. With each breath there is an intake and outgiving of matter. The inner sphere of breathing pertaining to the astral man, and closely allied with the functioning of consciousness, is also under the law of change. The most evident effects of this law are seen in the growth of the body from birth to youth, then on to maturity and to the decline of old age, the identity remaining the same throughout these changes. It is therefore illogical to assign reality in its true sense to that which is in constant flux. Rather is it to be sought in the cause and seat of the permanent identity of which consciousness is the constant witness: thus, the emphasis of action and reaction may be withdrawn from that which deludes the intellect and placed where clarity is assured.

The quality and degree of consciousness expressed, and the power of perception afforded, are relative to the receptive capacity of the lower nature. Intelligence "is a formless breath, composed of *intellectual* not elementary substances" (*S.D.* II, 93). The word "substance" in theosophical teachings is used to designate states relating to the noumenal plane, and "matter" to the phenomenal—the external plane of the five senses. The elementary substances mentioned are those which uncontrolled desire releases, and which, flooding the consciousness, vitiate the finer substance of intellect. For therein lies the seat of the baffling conditions that thwart the intelligence and cause delusions. Thought and feeling are the movers of the subtle substances of the inner man, who may work with either intelligent or elementary forces. If the feelings are inspired by anger, hate, envy and self interest, the inner man is tossed upon a sea of emotional disturbance, the clarity of his consciousness is obscured, and the power of discrimination lost in the vortex of the inner tempest.

The substantiality of thought is not to be passed over as a theory or hypothesis. The theosophist, ancient and modern, holds it to be a fact. As the consciousness conveys its burden of thought from the source material of mind to the plane of sense life, the substance of the lower principles adheres to and modifies the

motivation. The fourth or kamic principle has a lethal effect on conscious thought. This may be likened to material suspended in the atmosphere of a great metropolis. Seen from the top of a tall building where the air is clear—the sky above an intense blue—the activity on the streets below is lost in a grayish brown cloud. There lies within us the power to so color the consciousness that a chosen quality will become dominant. But whatever that quality, it has its certain effect upon the ray from spirit we call self-consciousness. It must not be thought that consciousness, proceeding as it does from the highest plane of our being, has power in itself to overcome the complexity of the lower principles. This adjustment is brought about by sustained will power. The impurities in the air of the city will modify the sun's rays; and in the sphere of our conscious life, the chosen trend of thinking may take similar toll of the rays of the spiritual sun.

Motivation is, as it were, the atmosphere of consciousness, conditioning and moulding our thought forms. The earth's atmosphere impinges with great pressure upon the body, and the very shape of the human form is dependent for its preservation upon this constant pressure. In our inner nature we create an atmosphere which exerts a like pressure upon the form our thoughts assume. If the ego takes no preventive steps, that form becomes fixed, defying his will power to change it. But, as motivation is of our own making, it may be either dark or light. We have the power to choose which. Karma follows undeviatingly the causes these choices establish, tracing the eddy of effects to the last vibration, and from life to life.

It is not correct to assume that each act has its special motivation, at one time selfish, at another altruistic. Without conscious direction our reactions to vicissitudes and environment assume a fixed trend. The emotions and feelings are constantly affected by the pairs of opposites, such as heat and cold, love and hate, or the inner centrifugal and centripetal forces set in motion by our power of choice. A thousand possible combinations of various opposites influence the uncontrolled emotions; in their turn the emotions impair the intelligence and obscure motivation. To become free from the influence of the pairs of opposites is not only desirable, but possible through the establishment of a trend away from emotional reactions. When this condition is established there is an almost immediate clarification of the consciousness, the intelligent perceptive powers gain their right relation to reason, and the body reacts favorably.

Youth forms the ideal period for the establishment of such a trend. Fortunate the individual who perceives this truth in early life, and, striving for the quality of holiness, clears the light of consciousness shining through the lower vehicles, and realizes to some extent its source. He may then find, when old age draws near, that he is able to look upon his mental deposits without shame and without regret. One's thoughts may build a dark and restless "elementary" to delay him in kama-loka and haunt his personality in the next life, or they can fashion a form of bright intelligence, embodying the powers of soul and persisting as an appropriate vehicle of conscious immortality.

Karmic Agents

There can be no objection to the general well-known broad propositions put in the essay on *Men Karmic Agents,* nor to the statement that there is no excuse under Karma for a failure to do a present duty in protecting those who are wronged or attacked, but the tone of that essay is really in the direction of showing the necessity of our being reformers of other people who offend in various ways. It is a personal question with every theosophist whether he will assume this position; the general proposition "Men are Karmic agents" does not make it entirely clear. For horses, dogs, the wind, the whole of manifested nature, are Karmic agents as much as Man is. There is no doubt many people need reforming, and if one's observation did not show that they generally rebelled at interference it might be well for us to ride forth to the reformation. But for one person who is benefitted or reformed by our punitive measures in social life, there are probably one hundred who are only angered. Respecting government and police, of course I have nothing to say. If, then, an enormous percentage of people are made to set up extreme currents of anger and bitterness by our reformatory acts and speech in small matters, we must some day feel the reaction even though we thought to benefit Society in what we did. In those cases, while attempting to constitute ourselves conscious Karmic agents, we succeeded, but at the same time set up new Karma just as bad as that which we appeared to be working out: an endless chain, a ceaselessly moving wheel moved again, and nothing particular gained except a minute percentage of benefit, a larger proportion of bitterness evoked, and the largest result being self-satisfaction at having punished the fault of another.

—W.Q.J.

The Path, February, 1892

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

(From p. 252 to p. 260. Vol. I.)

By W. Q. J.

ORDER OF THE ELEMENTALS ESOTERICALLY is, *Fire, air, water, earth. (2nd par.)* Counting up from the earth, the order for the elementals, or the nature spirits in the elements, is: earth elementals, water elementals, air elementals, fire elementals. And it has always been said that those of the fire are the wisest and most distant so far as cognition of or by us is concerned, that the airy ones are also wise, and those of the water dangerous. Those of the earth have been described by seers in the form of gnomes sometimes seen by clairvoyant miners in the depths under us, and of this class also are those that have given rise to the superstition among the Irish respecting the fairies.

FIRE IN THE PRECEDING ROUNDS. She says (p. 253), "For all we know, FIRE may have been *pure* AKASA, the first Matter of the . . . 'Builders'." The phrase "For all we know" is sometimes to be translated "Thus it was."

THE FIFTH ELEMENT IN THE FIFTH ROUND. This, as said before in these notes, will be "the gross body of Akasa" (257), and "by becoming a familiar fact of Nature to all men, as air is familiar to us now, [will] cease to be . . . hypothetical."

WHAT IS THE SIXTH SENSE TO BE? In the first paragraph of page 258 she says that at first there will be a partial familiarity with a characteristic of matter to be known then as permeability, which will be perceived when certain senses have been developed, and after that this singular characteristic will be fully known, as it will be developed concurrently with the sixth sense. We may therefore argue that she means to describe the sixth sense as one which will (among other things) give to us the power to permeate matter with ourselves. Let some one else now carry this idea further, as it is no doubt correct. It would seem that both the matter-characteristic and the power in man are being here and there exhibited, or else some of the phenomena seen at spiritualistic séances could never have happened; but alas! we need not look for aid there so long as the beloved "spirits from the summerland" continue to hold sway over their votaries.

NOTE.—This article, first published in *The Path*, February, 1892, concludes the series reprinted since November.—EDS. THEOSOPHY.

THE EARTH IN ITS EARLY PERIODS. Some students have thought that this globe in its early times—when, following the statements in *Esoteric Buddhism*, the human life-wave and so on had not come—had no life on it, supposing in a vague way that there was, say in the fire-mist time, a mass of something devoid of life. This is contradicted and explained on page 258 in the second paragraph, for: "Thus Occultism disposes of the so-called Azoic age of Science, for it shows that there never was a time when the Earth was without life upon it." This is asserted for no matter what form or sort of matter, thus: "Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule, even in its most gaseous condition, there is life in it, however latent and unconscious."

OF SPIRIT AND MATTER. In the commentary on *p. 258* the author plainly writes, "Spirit is the first differentiation of (and in) SPACE; and Matter is the first differentiation of Spirit." This is a clear statement of what she desired to teach respecting spirit and matter, and as in other places it is said that spirit and matter are the opposite poles of the One—the Absolute—and agreement has to be made between the two. There is no real disagreement, since it is evident that differentiation must proceed in a definite order, from which it results that there must be always one state, plane, place, power, and idea in nature that is above and different from and beyond all others. And when we go beyond spirit, the highest we may speak of is the Absolute, which is the container of the next two—spirit and matter, the latter following the first in order of differentiation. These are said to be co-eternal, and, indeed, are so, as far as our minds are concerned, for the reason that we cannot grasp either the first or the second differentiation of the Absolute. But because this doctrine of the co-eternalness of spirit and matter has been taught, there never being the one without the other also present, some students have fallen into a materialistic view, probably because matter is that which being near to us is most apparent, and others, remaining somewhat vague, do not define the doctrine at all. Spirit and matter are co-eternal because they exist together in the Absolute, and when the first differentiation spoken of above takes place, so does the second immediately. Hence, except when we are dealing with metaphysics, they must be regarded as the two poles of the one absolute. And the *Bhagavad Gita* does not support the contrary, for it only says there is no spirit without also matter, as it is dealing through the words of Krishna with things as they are *after* the differentiation has taken place.

There is another class of theosophists who speak of the "super-personal god," asserting at the same time that they do not mean "a personal God," and they are opposed by still another class who point to the well-known denial by H.P.B. of the existence of a personal god. It is in the sentence quoted that both of these may come to an agreement, for the believers in the super-personal deity can without doubt find support in the lines on page 258. For if spirit is the first, then matter is a grade below it, however fine and imperceptible that distinction may be.

If further we say, as many of us do, that the great inherent ideas of man were given to him by the first great teachers whose descendants and pupils the Adepts are, then we here also see how it is that there is such a wide and universal belief in a God.

It must, again, be the origin of that universal optimism which may be found also in the ranks of the theosophists, who, while for present days are pessimistic, must be called the greatest optimists on the face of the earth. There are many other matters in this sentence. Many a student has puzzled his head very often in trying to discover from where come the impulse and the plan as well as the idea of perfection, for it must as a first thing reside somewhere, whether abstractly or concretely. Perhaps it is here; those students can look here at any rate.

A MYSTERIOUS PRINCIPLE MENTIONED. After going for a little space into the formation of this globe by the first builders, she speaks (page 259) of a certain *akasic* principle to which no name is given but left in hiatus. But in the note on that page we see, and I am violating nothing in referring to it, that very clearly it is pointed out that the primordial substance of which she then writes *"is the body of those Spirits themselves, and their very essence."* Now in many places in her writings, and also in those of other knowing ones through all time, this primordial substance is said to be one that, once controlled, gives him who has power over it the most transcendent abilities—sway alike over mind and matter.

She and all the rest of us are quite safe in speaking of it, since there are but few indeed who will see anything in it at all. Yet the few can have the hint if they never got it before. This, however, should always remain as a hint, and there ought to be no attempt to make it clear to science, for nothing will be gained except ridicule and maybe worse.

LIFE IN THE KINGDOMS

LIFE itself we never see; we can note only forms of life. In those kingdoms which come under our observation, the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human, there are many modes and ranges of operation, and all these are phases of Life.

We do not consider the larger measure of life to be that which shows the greatest physical activity, for we find that intelligence rules and guides physical life in all its phases. Most especially is this so in the human kingdom, which by reason of its greater intelligence rules, and is constantly in greater and greater measure ruling, all the lower visible kingdoms. It is also seen that in the human kingdom itself, from the lowest savage to the highest civilized man, there are many grades of intelligent life, and that a high grade of ruling intelligence is oftentimes connected with a very small power of physical activity, and by reason of intelligence, controls forms endowed with greater physical power. So we have to conclude that intelligence or consciousness is a higher form of life than that of mere physical activity.

We note that the operation of physical life is limited by its form and conditions, but that the operation of consciousness has no determinable limits. Therefore we may speak of physical life as the effect of conscious life or intelligence, and of all life as expressions of knowledge and power on the physical and mental planes. But here again we are confronted with the fact that mental activity may be wide or circumscribed in action: hence we are compelled to place mental activity, together with physical activity, in the category of effects, and the causal life still eludes us. Here it is that most enquiry stops, since the basis taken is that human knowledge has reached its limitation. So the great mass of humanity, careless, ignorant, or despairing, lives in the ever changing circumstances of mental existence. Some, in their suffering, pray in blind faith to some unknown power to relieve them, and others, careless of what may come so long as the present moment is free from care and gives them their desires, trample upon their weaker and less favored brethren in order to maintain their desired condition. Yet they know that to all come pain, and sorrow and death, with nothing in the range of their so-called science or religion to give them a reason for it all, nor show the way toward real life.

But they need not so live. The Messengers of the Gods are again holding out to mankind the Crown of Life—the power to truly know, to live, to be. It is the realized consciousness of the oneness

of humanity and of all creatures and beings; it is the realization of their divinity, which is Life itself. From this one consciousness spring all the universes, all beings, all conditions and circumstances, under the great Law which will not be denied, but which operates incessantly to restore equilibrium and harmony. It is pointed out that man is divine and immortal—a creator, preserver, and destroyer or regenerator in his own essential nature, that his present form, condition, and circumstance are his own creations, the offspring of his own desire and will. Through all, Life teaches Unity; yet each man in his power has attempted to create and preserve a world for himself alone. A multiplicity of creators, working selfishly, have made the world we see a world of sorrow, suffering, pain and death.

The cure lies in man's hands. He must realize that Divinity is Life itself, that all *forms* of existence are but temporary aspects of Life itself, that the Path and Goal of all is the same; in reality, that birth, human life and death are but winding and recurrent steps along which he may ascend to the Temple of Knowledge. On none of those steps may he stay, nor may he hope to hold for himself events of his journey for any length of time. It is with man himself we have to do, and not with the events of travel which brings us into more or less close contact as human beings. The progress and happiness of the unit is bound to and limited by the progress and happiness of the mass, and consequently the true happiness of the individual lies in the direction of service to the highest welfare of humanity. Service means an ascent and a descent, an ascent to higher conditions for those who would serve, a descent into lower conditions for those who have attained, in order that they may meet and assist those who as yet but dimly see the way, and are held down by their own conditions and those of the race to which they belong.

Life, then, is Spirit and Soul and Mind and body—Creator and creature—Being and action—on every plane. True Life is conscious service—and true and full service is conscious Life.

We must as frequently as possible remind ourselves that our real life is not that external, material life, which takes place here upon earth, in our sight, but the inner life of our spirit, for which the visible life is only a scaffolding necessary for the rearing of the building of our spiritual growth. —TOLSTOY

EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

On Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms

IT seems strange that this is the only Book which has no title. Can it be simply because it serves as a continuation of Book II*? In Book* II*, Aphorism 29, the last three practices named are not taken up until the beginning of Book* III*, but the remainder of the Book is very detailed and specific in contrast to this beginning.*

In the commentary upon Aphorism 4 of this Book it is explained that the word "Sanyama"—used more frequently than any other capitalized designation in Book III—cannot be properly rendered in English. A title for Book III which employed "restraint" or a similar word would therefore be misleading. From consideration of these tangible difficulties regarding a name for such instructions, it is natural to notice the similar difficulties which would inevitably attend the "titling" of any subjects relating to practical occultism. Techniques for "Getting Occult Power" might command fascination—but for the wrong reasons. Patanjali, apparently, as would any initiate, avoided calling *special* attention to such things, but simply mentioned them after the proper philosophical background had been provided. In this sense, the chapter is a continuation of Book II.

Mr. Judge states in the Preface that "Book III is for the purpose of defining the nature of the perfected state"—a definition which can be understood only in terms of the philosophical clarifications offered in Books I and II. When abrupt transitions of development occur in Patanjali, a reference to Mr. Judge's preface will often offer a germinal thought on the general scope and purpose of the several Books taken as a whole. For instance, the problem of separating philosophic ideas from specific techniques of psychological discipline is illumined by Mr. Judge's explanations. The last paragraph of the preface implies another factor which should be borne in mind: the "specifics" of such teachings as Patanjali's are peculiarly fitted for men of a certain "temperament" and character, and are not as universally applicable as might be supposed.

Aphorism 3: In "The Voice of the Silence," Samadhi is referred to as "the state of faultless vision." How would it be possible to reach such a high state of consciousness by concentrating on a material subject or object of sense?

An Adept is one who moves with the knowledge that there is no real distinction between spirit and matter. Any form or object becomes for him, it is said, the mirror of the universe—both objective and subjective. All definitions of Samadhi are not, it should be noted, synonymous with "the highest spiritual state." As a sort of "beatific vision," Samadhi may be compared with devachan—if we can imagine devachan consciously controlled by one in that state. Samadhi can be entered by all those who attain a certain degree of knowledge of occultism—by those who move toward becoming Dharmakayas, as well as by those on the Nirmanakaya path. H.P.B. called Samadhi an "ecstatic trance," and it is also implied by her that Samadhi should not be confused with the state of Samadhana (see *Glossary*) in which "a Yogi can no longer diverge from the path of spiritual progress."

One of the first principles infused in the teachings of initiated occultists is that control of all one's faculties and the perfection of Yoga do *not* mean automatic entrance into the highest initiation. The purpose of Raj Yoga is "divine union," but its *practice* is the exercise of will upon the various degrees of resistance encountered in the world of matter. In a special sense, therefore, the practice of Yoga is a science relating to matter—power over various forms of matter invisible to the naked eye. But Raj Yoga means the *fitting use* of the knowledge, as well as the ability to command the unseen forces of nature.

Aphorism 5: (a) In what way is the "discerning power" to be distinguished from discrimination? It is clear that true discrimination is by no means "ordinary."

(b) In the note on Aphorism 6, it is suggested that special modifications ensue after many other "afflictions" are removed, these, too, to be got rid of by means of Sanyama. Would this refer to the trials of chelaship?

(a) All human beings exercise some form or degree of discrimination—the highest degree obviously calling for considerable development of "discerning power." This "power" is, of course, common to all men, and is the root of self-consciousness. All men must discriminate, in the sense that they select or prefer, but the "discerning power," as Patanjali speaks of it, connotes more than simply conscious personal preference. We can know *that* we prefer something, yet it is far more important to know exactly *why*. A full manifestation of discerning power would occur within the mind of the man who is able to see the correct proportions of

all the factors involved in each opportunity for choice. This would also be "discrimination" in its philosophic meaning.

(b) "Chelaship" in the philosophical sense means any self-conscious pledge to undertake one-pointedness *in action.* The "afflictions and obstructions described in the previous books" have primarily to do with mental discipline—the attainment of concentration and one-pointedness in *thought.* This mental discipline is but a means to the "end" of action, however, and the practical use of a discipline involves complications which can be revealed only in and through action. Thus the chela, be he one of Patanjali's pupils or a worker for the present Theosophical Movement, will inevitably encounter all manner of disquieting circumstances and attitudes, which tend to test and strain his initial mental calmness. But such an one has the advantage of the instilled habits of mental discipline, and the advantage of viewing goals and purposes integrated with that discipline. This is the difference between "chelaship" and religion, for the latter demands "devotion" during periods of both outer and inner strain without having first supplied that mind-control which enables the devotee to meet all circumstances as a responsible moral agent. For the religious man (whether he be called Christian, Buddhist or Theosophist), the burning issues of life tend to be over-simplified if he simply refers to hallowed phrases instead of giving them needed thinking on his own part, and his inner growth can thus be considerably retarded.

Desire and Will

In ordinary life the will is not man's servant, but, being then guided solely by desire, it makes man a slave to his desires. . . . The system of Patanjali postulates that *Ishwara,* the spirit in man, is untouched by any troubles, works, fruits of works, or desires, and when a firm position is assumed with the end in view of reaching union with spirit through concentration, he comes to the aid of the lower self and raises it gradually to higher planes. In this process the Will by degrees is given a stronger and stronger tendency to act upon a different line from that indicated by passion and desire. Thus it is freed from the domination of desire and at last subdues the mind itself. But before the perfection of the practice is arrived at the will still acts according to desire, only that the desire is for higher things and away from those of the material life.

—W. Q. J.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"History Has Tongues"

Evidence of the mass cycle of reincarnation—approximately 1,500 years in this age—is most persuasive when it is presented unintentionally. The cultural effects of national and racial cycles of return are realities of history which, when intelligently described, speak for themselves. This is pre-eminently the case in *History Has Tongues* by Wilfrid Wolfendale, a small volume published last year in London by Victor Gollancz. The author subtitles his book, "A Study of the Comparative Development of Ancient and Modern Civilizations," and much of the content is devoted to the parallels between the classical ages of Greece and Rome and recent European and American history. For theosophical students, the book will serve virtually as a commentary on the passage in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 121) which says: "For as the masses of persons return from *devachan*, it must follow that the Roman, the Greek, the old Aryan and other ages will be seen again and can to a very great extent be plainly traced."

History Has Tongues was written in a German prisoners-of-war camp, with only the reference books sent to its author by the Red Cross. Mr. Wolfendale, an officer in the Royal Artillery, was captured during the retreat from Dunkirk and composed his study during the summer of 1944 while confined in *Oflag* VII B. Previously, at the notoriously overcrowded *Oflag* VI B, he helped to establish for his fellow prisoners a "university" with various "faculties," and he himself lectured, without the assistance of texts, on ancient history. Hazy on dates and details—he graduated from Cambridge some 17 years ago—Mr. Wolfendale confined his lectures to "trends and tendencies" in the development of civilization—a method and point of view which bears great fruit in his present book. Like Nehru's much larger work, *Glimpses of World History*, which was written under similar conditions, *History Has Tongues* embodies the rare quality of effective and accurate generalization, the harvest of many hours of sustained reflection without excessive "reading."

Revolutionary Rome and Europe

The author's emphasis throughout is on the moral qualities of civilization. He is at pains to make clear the factors which undermine the moral stability of the social order, as well as to establish the ethical foundations upon which enduring societies

have been built. *History Has Tongues,* while full of warnings for the present, is not a depressing or stridently condemnatory work. It has its writer's serenity and speaks with measured conviction concerning the moral principles which are needed to alter the flow of contemporary history toward a better future. The book is too closely argued for much to be quoted out of context, but one passage, dealing with the comparison between the popular reform movement led by Sulla in ancient Rome, and the cycle—about 2,000 years later—of revolution and reform in European history, will illustrate its quality.

Revolution Is Not Enough

Mr. Wolfendale writes (pp. 91-93):

> The French Revolution irrevocably set the tempo of the age, and even granted that the French revolutionaries had received disastrous provocation from both their own and foreign Governments, they failed signally to exercise the restraint that could alone have remedied the situation. . . . Girondist impotence to inaugurate the golden age thence led straight to disillusionment, and their discomfiture was the opportunity of their extremist opponents. The failure of principle would be rectified by the use of force, and what could not be produced at home would be extorted abroad. A military adventure ensued which frightened and appalled the watching world.
>
> For what followed, then, the democrats themselves were not without their share of blame. . . . They disregarded the first principles of human government, displayed an intolerance that was fraught with the utmost menace, and surrendered to the lowest passions and prejudices in a way that killed all the prospects of consistent action or a firm allegiance. . . .

Parallel With Rome

> In Rome we found that this prevailing sickness was the symptom of an incipient materialism. In the late 18th century and early 19th century the case was the same again. The upper classes were seeking to retain their authority, not for the sake of any ideal of the common good, which their government had long since ceased to envisage, but simply to preserve those privileges and properties which assured them their state of affluence. Like the Senatorial order before them, they looked no farther than the boundaries of their own magnificent estates, and studied only their own material comfort, regardless of a world of pain. . . .
>
> *Laissez-faire,* as a political creed, eventually came to dominate the greater part of the 19th century, and was inevitably the parent of immense prosperity. But at the same time it was the true child

> of materialism. For the moral implications of such capitalistic procedure were completely overlooked, and utility became the one and only value. True, a measure of social progress might be effected because it was expedient and the sentimentalism of the "Rights of Man" was very properly exploded, but economic ruthlessness was hardly affected, and middle-class morality became more and more a matter of convention. In this atmosphere the spirit of social and political collaboration had not a chance to breathe.

Mr. Wolfendale continues with a review of the impact of scientific thought on traditional Christian ethics, and the subjection of religious dogma to the devastating criticism of trained intellectuality. Under his eye, the many correspondences between nineteenth century Western civilization and Sullan Rome grow lucid. It is no exaggeration to say that, with the help of this book, the return of egos from the past, bringing their old ideas and attitudes, and taking up the same activities once again, can be "very plainly traced."

INDIA OUTLAWS "UNTOUCHABILITY"

What is apparently an objective account of India's caste system appeared in *Life* for May 19. Occasion for the story was the action taken by the Indian Constituent Assembly on April 29, to outlaw "untouchability," the most disgraceful and inhuman feature of the caste system as practiced in India for many centuries. Impulse for this far-reaching reform came from the long campaign of the Indian National Congress against untouchability. As *Life* points out, untouchability and other customs of caste discrimination are bound up with the religious beliefs of the Hindus, and it cannot be hoped that suddenly, simply by the passage of a law, untouchability will disappear from the Indian scene. But it is also true that "For 50 million people who do India's dirtiest work this is the first step toward an eventual end to discrimination in schools, temples and even railroad stations." There is some significance in the fact that the reform followed soon after the promise by the British of complete political freedom to the Indian people.

"ANTIQUITY OF THE VEDAS"

In explaining the caste system as an expression of Hindu religion, *Life*, like all Western publications, draws on the opinions of European Orientalists for the dates that are given. Thus the

Vedas are said to have defined the "four basic divisions of humanity," or the four castes, "more than 1,000 years before Christ." This is an error. An article in the first number of the *Theosophist* (October, 1879) explains that this dating of the Vedas resulted from the use by Max Müller of the untrustworthy commentaries of Sayana, leading the former to name "1100 or 1200 B.C. as the earliest time when we may suppose the collection of the Vedic hymns to have been finished." This article, "Antiquity of the Vedas," cites the contrary view of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, that "The Vedas have now ceased to be objects of study for nearly 5,000 years." The Hindu authority places the *origin* of the four Vedas in an immense antiquity, founding his opinion on old commentaries of the ante-Mahabharatan period.

True Castes not Hereditary

Life is also misleading in its failure to explain that caste was not always determined by birth. Readers are allowed to suppose that Hindu religion, even in its origin, prescribed caste distinction as hereditary, whereas this is actually a priestly corruption of the Vedic teaching. One of the first theosophists to protest the injustice of the caste system, as practiced in recent times, was Damodar K. Mavalankar, who joined the Theosophical Society soon after Madame Blavatsky arrived in India in 1879. Writing on "Castes in India" (*Theosophist* for May, 1880), this young Brahmin announced his abandonment of his caste, as a consequence of his study of Theosophy, offering the following explanation:

> . . . I consider it every man's duty to do what he can to make the world better and happier. This can proceed from a love for humanity. But how can a man love the whole of humanity if he has no love for his countrymen? Can he love the whole, who does not love a part? If I, therefore, wish to place my humble services at the disposal of the world, I must first begin by working for my country. And this I could not do by remaining in my caste. I found that, instead of a love for his countrymen, the observance of caste distinction leads one to hate even his neighbor, because he happens to be of another caste. . . . I saw that, were it not for this distinction, India would not have been so degraded, for this distinction engendered hatred among her sons. . . . The foundation of immorality was thus laid, until it has reached now so low a point that, unless this mischief is stopped, the tottering pillars of India will soon give way.

ALL MEN BROTHERS

Damodar called upon his fellows to renounce the caste system as an act of brotherhood, and of patriotism, for the sake of India's future. He continues:

> I do not by this mean to blame my ancestors who originally instituted this system. To me their object seems to be quite a different one. It was based in my opinion on the qualities of every person. The caste was not then hereditary as it is now. This will be seen from the various ancient sacred books which are full of instances in which Kshatriyas, and even Mahars and Chambhars, who are considered the lowest of all, were not only made and regarded as Brahmins, but almost worshipped as demi-gods simply for their qualities. If such is the case, why should we still stick to that custom which we now find not only impracticable but injurious? I again saw that, if I were to observe outwardly what I did not really believe inwardly, I was practising hypocrisy. I found that I was thus making myself a slave, by not enjoying the freedom of conscience. I was thus acting immorally. But Theosophy had taught me that to enjoy peace of mind and self-respect, I must be honest, candid, peaceful and regard all men as equally my brothers, irrespective of caste, colour, race or creed. This, I see, is an essential part of religion. I must try to put these theoretical problems into practice. These are the convictions that finally hurried me out of my caste.

And these are the convictions, so simply stated by an Indian theosophist 67 years ago, which at last have brought about the legal abolition of untouchability in India.

DO WE REMEMBER?

A news dispatch from Freelandville, Ind., April 3, tells of Gary Trent, 21 months old and blind from birth, who has been playing the piano since he was 18 months old. "Gary's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Trent, said they had not publicized the baby's ability, other than mention it to neighbors, because they didn't expect anyone would believe them." The baby began learning tunes by imitating his father. On April 3 he played several tunes for Mrs. Ruth Wagner, music instructor and piano teacher for 25 years, who described the performance as "remarkable."

> "He certainly has an amazing talent to be as young as he is, she said. "He should grow up to be a very good musician."
>
> Mrs. Wagner heard the baby play half an hour. He played such tunes as "Chopsticks," "San Antonio Rose," "Bell Bottom Trousers," and "Wabash Cannonball."

"But he played 'My Darling Nellie Gray' best of all," she said. ". . . His rhythm and tempo are the most remarkable."

(*Pasadena Independent*, April 4.)

Infant prodigies such as Gary Trent are not often regarded as messengers from another world, but they might be. Their memory of a prior life is expressed in skills they do not need to learn and capacities they have had no opportunity *this time* to develop. But they can excite only marvel, instead of understanding, unless their case illustrates a natural law—the rebirth of soul. The *fact* of their memory is a reminder that education, in the sense of leading out inherent knowledge, will strictly perform its function only when every soul is known to be "from of old," and egoic memory is no longer disbelieved in, but encouraged.

"Morals" For Materialists

Philip Wylie, known for years to magazine readers as an author of entertaining tales of deep-sea fishing, whose *Generation of Vipers* (1943) shocked conventional people and delighted hard-headed "realists," has written another "serious" book—*An Essay on Morals*. The jacket blurb and foreword constitute an unambiguous claim by Mr. Wylie to having written *the* practical handbook for intelligent living in the disordered modern world. Disarmingly simple, with the verbal power of intense if superficial thinking, the "Essay" will doubtless gain many enthusiastic followers for Mr. Wylie and give great impetus to the new forms of post-war materialism. The author begins in a mood of impatience, disgusted with all humans who refuse to accept the obvious "scientific truth" that man is an animal. To their failure to adopt the conclusions of modern anthropology—"finally proven beyond doubt," says Mr. Wylie—are to be traced the illusions and superstitions that hopelessly confuse modern civilization. "My thesis," he writes, "offered in the spirit of science—in the expectation, that is, of service only till more truth is learned—begins and ends with the assurance that you, good reader, are a beast, and so am I, and that we are nothing else."

Here, of course, Mr. Wylie speaks as a reactionary—one who has reacted against the traditional theology. He is a representative of the attempt "to interpret Nature on purely materialistic lines," an effort which, as Madame Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine*, "has thriven on account of the strange delusion that—as a scientist of repute puts it—'All hypotheses and theories with respect to the rise of man can be reduced to *two* (the Evolutionist and the Biblical exoteric account). . . . There is no other hypoth-

esis conceivable . . .'!!" The author of *An Essay on Morals* makes it plain that he embraces the animal-origin theory to get rid of the personal God idea:

> Only a brave man [he writes] will dare to think with solemnity that he is an animal and there is in consequence no human God, and he will need still more courage to hold in his mind the speculations which will rise thereafter. His solitude will become his chief associate. If he gains self-reliance in it, if he gains peace, if he gains some of the nobility he may envisage, if it makes him rich in spirit, or if he surmounts obstacles of death and time, he will still need in the morning and the dark night an elemental will to meet the dimensions of his honest mind.

CATALOGUE OF WRONGS

The book continues with an indignant attack on the numerous hypocrisies and injustices of modern society. Mr. Wylie's explosive prose moves rapidly from subject to subject. He explores the evils of militarism and berates organized religion, naming as "blackmail" the methods of church organizations. His general indictments are supported by occasional statistics of social decline and evidences of moral disintegration. All in all, this book is a sizzling catalogue of the multiplying abuses and wrongs of Western civilization. While there have been many such books in recent years, this one requires particular attention because it contains not only a diagnosis but a prescription as well—a prescription offered with a "Brave New World" flourish, as though mankind had been waiting for millenniums for Philip Wylie to solve its problems. It should be noted, too, for the reason that it states popularly a point of view that has been slowly developing in intellectual circles for a generation or more.

THE NEW "FREEDOM"

While offered as an explanation of human nature in terms of Freud and Jung, Mr. Wylie's contentions are more reminiscent of the theories of men like Trigant Burrow and Wilhelm Reich, both of whom maintain that man's psychological and emotional disorders are due to his failure to accept his entirely animal nature as the primary fact of life. Burrow, author of *The Social Basis of Consciousness,* is a crusader for freedom from tradition—from all those customs and beliefs which are founded on the idea that man is anything more than physical organism. (See THEOSOPHY XXVII, 400-407.) Reich contends for the more specialized thesis that moralistic ideas about sex have ruined the modern

world and he would eliminate completely all restraints on sex behavior except those which individuals establish for themselves on the basis of animal impulses. At the present time, followers of Reich constitute a virtual cult of sexual "freedom," claiming that both personal psychological problems and most of the social injustices of the time are due to unnatural repressions of the sex instinct. Mr. Wylie seems to be of a similar persuasion, although his discussion of sex is more "polite" than the brutish clinical realism of Reich. His thesis, however, is more a commentary on the warping effects of the sense of "sin" which pervades Western ideas on this subject than it is a platform for promiscuity.

New Dogmas For Old

Effective criticism of such a book as *An Essay on Morals* is difficult for the reason that more must be said than simply to brand it as animalistic materialism. The author is undoubtedly possessed of a kind of humanitarian zeal. He sees and brilliantly describes the consequences of blind belief in religion. He recognizes the source of insanity in external psychological controls over human behavior. He knows from experience that a healthy man is one who makes his own moral decisions—who ignores the Church and its irrational prohibitions. His attack on convention is largely justified, for it is plain that orthodox moral conceptions are founded on the false assumptions that man is the creature of an outside God and that certain patterns of "acceptable" behavior are more important in morals than the motives behind action. But seeing these things, Mr. Wylie has become Atheism's Angry Man, campaigning with fanatical fervor for a new "biological" religion. As a result, he denies the existence of any principles or truths behind the distortions and corruptions of religion, and propagates what amounts to a doctrine of moral nihilism. His influence, therefore, despite occasional critical clarity, is in the direction of unqualified bestiality.

Paths of "Intellectuality"

A little more than fifty years ago, in *Lucifer* for August, 1896, appeared a letter from one of the Theosophical Teachers, which aptly describes the tendency represented by such books as *An Essay on Morals:*

> The intellectual portion of mankind seems to be fast dividing itself into two classes: the one unconsciously preparing itself for long periods of temporary annihilation or states of non-consciousness,

> owing to the deliberate surrender of intellect and its imprisonment in the narrow grooves of bigotry and superstition—a process which cannot fail to lead to the utter deformation of the intellectual principle; the other unrestrainedly indulging its animal propensities with the deliberate intention of submitting to annihilation pure and simple, in case of failure, and to millenniums of degradation after physical dissolution. Those intellectual classes reacting upon the ignorant masses—which they attract, and which look up to them as noble and fit examples to be followed—degrade and morally ruin those they ought to protect and guide. Between degrading superstition and still more degrading brutal materialism, the White Dove of Truth has hardly room whereon to rest her weary unwelcome feet.
>
> It is time that Theosophy should enter the arena. . . . (THEOSOPHY X, 69.)

THE CYCLE'S NEED

If Theosophy is unable to gain a hearing for its spiritual verities, these dread alternatives remain as the psychic and moral fate of a large portion of mankind. Post-war anxiety and disillusionment have accelerated the movement of the race mind in these directions, of which the outspoken animalism of psycho-analytical materialism is one broad highway to evolutionary failure. The other path, that of a return to sacerdotalism, is illustrated by such expressions as the series of articles on Roman Catholicism by Clare Boothe Luce, concluded in the April *McCall's*. The cleverness of such discussions can in no way disguise the fact that they constitute the abrogation of egoic responsibility, leading, in the end, to submission to priestcraft and the psychic fascination of ritual. It is *time*, indeed, for theosophists to "enter the arena"—to begin to reach a wider area of public interest. The problem, as always, is how this may be done. The methods of modern advertising, appealing to the gross appetites and lower psychic nature of the people, offer no avenue of appeal. Other channels of public education are clogged with regimented ideas, the trivia of mass entertainment, and are accessible only to those with vast sums of money. What is needed, perhaps, is a new spirit of determination on the part of theosophical students, a more profound realization of the deep need of all human beings for Theosophical truth, and an imagination stirred to find the means to bring these teachings to more soul-hungry men and women.